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Lithuania

Market Development Reports

Detention of Transshipments

2006

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Report Highlights:

Lithuanian officials have informed FAS Warsaw that they have started to more strictly enforce EU transshipment regulations, especially those that they interpret to apply to labeling. As a result, product with labels that do not include the language of the destination country or with labels that indicate a destination other than the actual destination may be detained.

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Lithuanian officials have informed FAS Warsaw that they have started to more strictly enforce EU transshipment regulations, especially those that they interpret to apply to labeling. As a result, product with labels that do not include the language of the destination country or with labels that indicate a destination other than the actual destination may be detained. For example, Lithuanian officials recently detained a shipment of U.S. poultry with Chinese labeling destined for Kazakhstan, even though Kazakhstan permits such imports.

EU transshipment regulations require documentary and identity checks. These transit regulations are found in EU Council Directive 97/78/EC, Article 11. This article states that the member country can only authorize transit if the consignment of products undergoes a documentary check and an identity check at the said border inspection post.

Definitions of these terms are found in Article 2 of the same Directive and are as follows:

“Documentary check” means the examination of the veterinary certificate(s) or veterinary document(s), or other document(s) accompanying a consignment; and,

“Identity check” means a check by visual inspection to ensure that the veterinary certificate(s) or veterinary document(s) or other document(s) provided for by veterinary legislation tally with the product itself.

Lithuanian authorities are carefully scrutinizing all documentation and products. They are reading the box and product labels of each consignment as a component of the identity check in order to ensure that these correspond to the documentation, such as the health certification. If the packaging notes a destination country other than the destination country noted on the health certificate, or if the labeling does not contain the language of the destination country, Lithuanian authorities will detain the shipment, until they receive written permission from destination country officials that the product will be permitted entry.

FAS Warsaw is working to clarify this issue with Lithuanian officials. In the meantime, companies should note that shipments transiting Lithuania might be detained if product labeling does not contain the language of the destination country, even though it may not be required by the destination country.